

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MAINE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

BENJAMIN BROWN

No. 1:24-cr-00045-SDN

AMENDED PROSECUTION VERSION OF THE OFFENSE

On about February 8, 2024, in the District of Maine and elsewhere, the Defendant, Benjamin Brown, did knowingly and willfully transmit in interstate commerce a communication containing a threat to injure the person of another, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 875(c). Specifically, the Defendant used the internet to post on YouTube statements threatening to hunt and kill immigrants.

In April 2021, a federal agent with the U.S. Secret Service interviewed the Defendant at his residence on Spring Street in Waterville, Maine, regarding comments that the Defendant posted on YouTube about harming political figures. The Defendant initially denied making the posts but later admitted during the interview that he may have made them and that he often gets frustrated by current events. At the end of the interview, the Defendant was cooperative and apologetic for making the posts.

About two years later, in April 2023, a federal agent with the FBI interviewed the Defendant about his comments on YouTube relating to preparing for a revolution and harming others. During that interview, the Defendant said he was “venting” online and that he had been contacted before about his threatening comments. The agent warned the Defendant that all statements online do not constitute free speech and advised the Defendant to read 18 U.S.C. § 875(c). The agent further advised the Defendant to review

any future comments for threatening terminology before posting them, and the Defendant said that he would review his comments and research the law provided.

On February 20, 2024, the FBI National Threat Operations Section (NTOS) Exigent Threat Research and Analysis Crisis Team (EXTRACT) received a voluntary emergency disclosure of information from Google LLC's Cyber Crime Investigation Group, indicating that Google Account Users vnice1937@gmail.com and bennybrown6278@gmail.com had made threats towards immigrants and other elected officials and were stockpiling weapons in preparation for a violent civil war.

Among other things, Google provided records from Google Payment Corp. showing that user bennybrown6278@gmail.com had the following information listed in Google Wallet: Benjamin Brown, an address for an apartment on Spring Street in Waterville, ME, with a phone number ending -8613. Additionally, Google records showed that user bennybrown6278@gmail.com used the Internet to post the following comments on YouTube:

- a. "EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARE TERRORISTS THAT BROKE INTO OUR COUNTRY AND WE HAVE EVERY LEGAL RIGHT TO KILL THEM AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M GOING TO DO AND THERE IS NOT A GODDAMN PERSON WHO'S GOING TO STOP ME NOT THE FBI NOT THE LOCAL POLICE NOT A MOTHERFUCKING SOUL I FUCKING DARE YOU" (Posted on February 8, 2024, at 8:58 PM PST); and
- b. "I'M GOING TO GO HUNTING FOR THESE ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS THAT HAVE TALKED TO THESE NEW YORK POLICE OFFICERS I'M GOING TO HUNT THEM DOWN AND KILL THEM" (Posted on February 8, 2024, at 8:53 PM PST).

On February 20, 2024, FBI Special Agents Dale Wengler and Andrew Drewer went to the Defendant's apartment on Spring Street in Waterville and interviewed him through a closed door. This interaction was recorded on a body-worn camera. Despite

multiple requests from the agents, the Defendant would not open the door but acknowledged that he was Benjamin Brown. The agents spoke with the Defendant about his recent posts on YouTube. The Defendant said this was the “third time” they had come by. The Defendant said he was not making threats towards others and that he was not going to hurt himself or anyone else because he is not a violent person. The Defendant stated that illegal immigrants “are invading our country” and that there is “going to be a civil war that breaks out.” He said he was scared for his family and angry, and that whatever comment he made were about an evil person.

During the interview on February 20, the Defendant asked: “Would it make you feel better if I deleted my YouTube account and I don’t make any more comments, so that way I don’t have to worry about having this happening again, would that make you feel better?” The agent read the Defendant most of the first YouTube comment above from February 8, and another comment posted by Brown that said: “These people deserve to be killed, they do not deserve to live.” In response, the Defendant said: “Abso-f**king-lutely they deserve to be killed, they broke into our country.” Later, he asked the agent: “What would you do if one of these illegal immigrants killed one of your loved ones?” The Defendant also said that he gets upset and says things online about hunting down illegal immigrants, and even though he said he will buy a gun, he hasn’t done so yet and he does not own a firearm.

On March 11, 2024, the Defendant was arrested and interviewed post-*Miranda*. The Defendant admitted that the Google Accounts bennybrown6278@gmail.com and vnice1937@gmail.com were his accounts. During the interview, the Defendant said he uses social media to “vent” and express frustration about the current political climate. The Defendant said he thought his posts would be blocked or removed from social

media. He said he uses social media to “vent safely,” as he feels he will “unload on someone” if he is unable to vent.

Also on March 11, federal agents executed a search warrant at the Defendant’s residence and on his person. From his residence, agents seized two computers, a tablet, and storage devices, among other things. Additionally, at the time of his arrest, agents located and seized a cell phone from the Defendant’s pocket that was assigned a phone number ending -8613. Pursuant to a search of the Defendant’s phone and devices, agents found information showing the use and presence of Google accounts bennybrown6278@gmail.com and vnice1937@gmail.com on the Defendant’s phone and several of the devices seized from his residence. In response to a search warrant, Google produced certified business records relating to Google accounts bennybrown6278@gmail.com and vnice1937@gmail.com, including records showing that user bennybrown6278@gmail.com sent the above threatening comments.

Had this case proceeded to trial, the Government would have proven the above facts through witness testimony, electronic evidence, photographs, video footage, and certified business records from Google. Specifically, the Government would have offered the testimony of the FBI agents and other law enforcement involved in the investigation concerning the events described above, in addition to testimony relating to an analysis of the Defendant’s phone and other devices. Also, the Government would have introduced in evidence photographs taken during the execution of the search warrant on the defendant’s residence, as well as body worn camera footage relating to the Defendant’s interview and subsequent arrest. The Government would have also offered in evidence certified business records from Google containing the threatening

comments made by the Defendant. The evidence would have been sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt the charge contained in the Indictment.

Date: June 11, 2025

Respectfully submitted,
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on June 11, 2025, I electronically filed the Government's Prosecution Version of the Offense with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send notification of such filing(s) to the following:

Connor Herrold, Esq.
Counsel for the Defendant

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